

Risk Management Agency Program Announcement

Contact: Eric Edgington (202) 690-2539

Eric.Edgington@rma.usda.gov

Washington, DC, Sept. 26, 2000 -- Risk Management Agency (RMA) Administrator, Ken Ackerman, announced that RMA investigators, working with USDA's Office of Inspector General (OIG) and prosecutors in the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Texas, uncovered evidence that has led to two criminal convictions and the indictment of a third person.

Sylvia Greiner, a crop insurance agent in Red River County, Texas, pled guilty before U.S. District Judge Richard Schell, to one count of conspiracy to commit crop insurance fraud against the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation (FCIC). The plea included voluntary exclusion from all USDA programs and restitution of \$591,816. She will be sentenced January 8, 2001.

"Roughly 90,000 family farmers in Texas and Oklahoma rely on the crop insurance program to get them through tough times," said Ackerman. "To deliberately abuse the program hurts farmers who have to pay higher premiums. I congratulate our investigatory team for putting together this strong case."

Mrs. Greiner's husband, farmer Donnie Greiner, has been indicted by a Federal grand jury in the Eastern District of Texas with one count of conspiracy to defraud the U.S. Government, 14 counts of making false statements to the FCIC, nine counts of making false claims against the FCIC, and three counts of interstate transportation of property obtained by fraud. His arraignment is scheduled for September 28, 2000.

The third conspirator, farmer John Houchin of McCurtain County, Oklahoma, pled guilty to one count of conspiracy to commit crop insurance fraud against the FCIC. Mr. Houchin is paying restitution of \$39,680 and began serving 4 months of home confinement on May 4, 2000.

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